

Bona Fide- Confronting Superficial Faith

Sermon Notes

January 10, 2021

Sermon on the Mount Described **Matthew 5-7**

- Spoken from a mount near Capernaum.
- Most believe it is a single sermon preached in one sitting, but there is an arguable case to be made that it is a compilation of sermons.
- Matthew 4:17 forms an important context to interpreting accurately this sermon.
*“From that time on Jesus began to preach ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven has come near.’” **Matthew 4:17***
 - The context for this verse was the imprisonment of John the Baptist.
 - John the Baptist message was the same *“Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven has come near.” **Matthew 3:2b***

Kingdom of heaven (def)- It is the present reality and future expectation of the church’s inclusion into the citizenship of heaven, heirship as part of God’s family. It is God’s dominion, his presence, his approval, his leadership, his holiness and his perfection realized in part now and fully in a time to come.

It is our Prayer “...your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”

Point of purpose “...Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things [we worry about] will be given to you as well.”

Repent- the attitude, the posture, the mindset of one who is preparing for the Kingdom and will enter the Kingdom. Ultimately, it is a change of thinking!

Repentance reveals sincere faith that is Kingdom bound. **Matthew 5:17-20**

- Jesus comes to give meaning to the Law. (17)
 - Abolishing the Law would be to end its role or authority.
 - Fulfilling the Law is to bring it to complete understanding and to bring to it’s fullest intent that which it could not do on its own.
 - The law gives shape to that which is holy, good, moral, and true while speaking to that which is evil, sinful, and distorted.
- The law in its entirety will stand forever. (18)
 - “For truly I tell you”—emphasizing this profound fact “amen”

- Jot and tittle [Image 1 “i” and Image 2 “P” vs. “R”]
- This Kingdom while under grace will not be lawless.
- To lives or teaches a setting aside of anything in the law will be considered least in the Kingdom of Heaven. (19a)
- Greatness in heaven will be bestowed upon the one who teaches and lives a life that is repentant according to pattern of righteousness Jesus lives out. (19b)
- The standard of righteousness taught and lived out by the religious leaders and teachers of their day will get you “killed”—eternally condemned. (20)
 - “certainly” there is no justification or wiggle room. They were missing the mark completely.
 - Their understanding, their teaching, and their form of living out righteousness was an abysmal failure.
 - WHY? Because it was superficial. It was not real. It was fake.

Superficial Faith (righteousness)

Core values

- Must look good to be esteemed by others.
- Focused on behavior modification.
- Self-confident or capable of achieving righteousness.
- Answer is found within your will, your gifts, your intellect.

Fruit

- Resistant to learning and being corrected.
- Blind to obvious truth.
- Easily angered by challenge.
- Character development is rarely considered.
- Avoids accountability.
- Self-deception is constant.

Sincere Faith (righteousness)

Core values

- Looks beyond self for help.
- Recognizes the sinful nature, flaws, and limitations of one’s self.
- Looks to Jesus for the example and empowerment of living a righteous life.
- As a result, there is greater emphasis on heart development—the inner man affects the outer man.

Fruit

- Grieves over sinful condition
- Humbly dependent
- Receives correction
- Welcomes truth and strives to learn
- Character transformation becomes a daily work of abiding with Christ.
- Welcomes accountability
- Awareness of sinful condition grows, but so does the strength to live life anew in Christ.

Take aways.

1. God sees through the facade of a superficial faith that values legalism over inner transformation.
2. Repentance will lead to a heart change not just a mind change.
3. The Kingdom of God is made up of people who are increasingly becoming more like Jesus and less like the world.

Discussion Guide

1. When you pray *“your Kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...”* What does this prayer statement mean? How would you explain the Kingdom of Heaven to someone in your oikos? What is your place in the Kingdom of Heaven?
2. How would you define superficial faith? How does repentance play a part in one’s sincere faith journey? Is it possible to have true faith and not be repentant? Why or why not?
3. Why would Jesus’ primary message (**Matthew 4:17**) be *“Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven has come near.”*?
4. How would you connect your own faith journey to the message of **Matthew 4:17** and how would you explain the need to repent to someone in your oikos?